

families in West Kensington—known as the “Badlands” because of its reputation as one of the worst drug centers in the United States. He was once a gang member himself and spent time in juvenile detention before turning his life around. In 1988, he created Proclaimers of Hope Ministries to take his message of change directly to the neighborhood's worst drug corners and create a local rehabilitation center.

The Proclaimers of Hope Ministries now has 200 volunteers donating 5,000 hours annually to serve the youth of the community and provide counseling and support to addicts. Its staff of 14 raises funds through personal donors and other churches throughout the county.

With Reverend Centeno's leadership, Proclaimers of Hope and Bethel Temple Church have created a diverse approach to prevention and recovery, using programs in the martial arts, music, drama, and tutoring, to help prevent crises in the lives of the community's young men and women. As one of his nominators explained, “part of the reason Luis has been so effective is that he has not set himself apart from the people he serves. His brand of healing requires hard work and discipline as well as grace and forgiveness, and he freely dispenses them all.”

Mr. Speaker, Reverend Luis Centeno has demonstrated tremendous leadership in the fight against drug addiction in his community and is clearly well deserving of this prestigious community health award. I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating Reverend Centeno on this wonderful achievement.

CONNIE BREMNER, RECIPIENT OF
ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON COMMUNITY
HEALTH LEADERSHIP
AWARD

HON. DENNIS R. REHBERG

OF MONTANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 27, 2001

Mr. REHBERG. Mr. Speaker, Connie Bremner, lifelong resident of Browning, Montana, is of the age when retirement is an option, but it's the last thing on her mind. Connie doesn't have the time nor inclination for anything but selfless service to the elderly and disabled in her community.

Connie, director of the Eagle Shield Senior Citizens Center, on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation, is the recipient of the prestigious Robert Wood Johnson Community Health Leadership award of \$100,000. The award gives \$95,000 to the center and \$5,000 to Connie. This award is one of only ten given nationwide. Most of the award money will go to fund short-term care for terminally ill people who are unable to get help elsewhere. Some of it will be used as startup money for a proposed Blackfeet home health care program.

Browning is in a lonely community on the windswept plains down the eastern slopes of the Montana Rockies. It's the heart of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation, a place where things have never been easy. When Connie became director of the Eagle Shield Senior Citizens Center in Glacier County, the nation's 95th poorest, she found the center and the seniors in distressed conditions. Connie made it her objective to transform the facility into a

model health and wellness center. She took the barest of bare-bones facilities and breathed life into it—and not just life, but spirit. Eagle Shield now serves over 600 elders with a wide range of programs, from nutrition education and meal delivery to home personal assistance and social activities. Connie's efforts to expand, improve and modernize health care for the impoverished, the elderly and the disabled has not only met physical needs, but has lifted spirits and provided hope.

Connie began with a loan of \$70,000 from the tribal government, which has already been repaid. The Robert Wood Johnson Community Health Leadership Program's press release states that Connie's “hard work has yielded great success for Eagle Shield, including the creation of an Alzheimer's screening and treatment program and a licensed, Medicaid reimbursed personal care attendant program for over 100 people with a disability unable to care for themselves.”

Connie expanded the personal care attendant program until now it serves over 100 people, ranging from age 4—94. In addition, the center “has trained 300 younger tribal members to become certified personal care attendants. Of those, 95 are currently employed on the reservation, an important contribution to a community who whose unemployment rate is over 70 percent.” Through Connie's leadership, the Eagle Shield Senior Citizens Center provides breakfasts and lunches to 200 seniors every day.

People like Connie have far greater influence than government programs. Government can oversee public health and public safety, but only people can give love and compassion. Connie has shown us that the most vital thing we do in life is look after each other by reaching out in kindness to the oldest and youngest and weakest among us. It is known in Browning that nothing will keep her from taking care of her elders. The elders count on Connie. Montana counts on Connie.

It is an honor to read Connie Bremner's accomplishments into the Congressional Record, although it should be recognized that this woman's deeds of love and kindness will leave a record much more enduring and significant in the community of Browning than this RECORD of ink and paper in the Halls of Congress. Connie Bremner has shown that the true treasures in Montana—The Treasure State—are people, the old and the young, the weak and the strong. Connie is a treasure to the Blackfeet Nation, to the state of Montana, and to the United States of America.

A TRIBUTE TO LESTER C.
PHILLIPS

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 27, 2001

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great North Carolinian and son of Harnett County, Mr. Lester C. Phillips who recently received the Distinguished Service Award of the Occoneechee Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

Lester Phillips was born on August 25, 1930 in Sampson County, North Carolina to Floyd and Erma Phillips and spent the majority of his early years working on the family farm. He

married Winifred Naylor in 1950 and together they raised two sons Ray and Robert. In 1959, Lester moved his young family just up the road to Harnett County, and the town of Dunn, to seek employment opportunities and a better life for his family.

Upon his arrival in Dunn, Lester landed a job with the H.P. Johnson Oil Company, where he quickly became Mr. H.P. Johnson's most trusted employee. In fact, Mr. Johnson was often overheard saying that “when he wanted something done right, he always looked to Leck.” After several years of working for Mr. Johnson, Lester began his career in the trucking business, which would later lead to his ownership of a small gas station on Highway 301 South in Harnett County and later the development of a waste management enterprise. From these humble beginnings Lester built a nationally recognized business that served locations all the way from Florida to Alaska.

Not only is Lester an outstanding success in the business world, but he is also a remarkable family man and community leader. He is also an active member at Spring Branch Baptist Church in Dunn.

But today we are here to pay tribute to Lester's contributions to the young people of Harnett County and to celebrate his recent accomplishment, receiving the Distinguished Service Award from the Boy Scouts of America. As the father of an Eagle Scout and a recipient of the Boys Scouts' Silver Beaver Award, I know first hand the importance that the organization plays in the lives of our nation's young people. With the help of men like Lester, the Boy Scouts mold young men to be active and productive citizens. I want to honor Lester today for helping to strengthen our nation's social fabric.

Mr. Speaker, Lester Phillips is a remarkable example of a citizen servant. He selflessly uses his time and energy to better the lives of the young men in Harnett County. He touches so many lives in so many public ways, but Lester's most important contributions to others are the ones only he knows about. And that is the way he wants it to be. That is a true testament to his unique and special character and the reason we honor him in this House today.

INTRODUCTION OF THE INDIAN
AND ALASKA NATIVE FOSTER
CARE AND ADOPTION

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 27, 2001

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, today, I am pleased to be joined by Representatives HAYWORTH, KILDEE and BONIOR to introduce legislation to correct an inequity in the laws affecting many Native American children. This effort is also supported by the National Indian Child Welfare Association, American Public Human Services Association, and National Congress of American Indians.

Every year, for a variety of often tragic reasons, thousands of children across the country are placed in foster care. To assist with the cost of food, shelter, clothing, daily supervision and school supplies, foster parents of children who have come to their homes through state court placement receive money through Title